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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

INFORMATION REPORT
CONFIDENTIAL

COUNTRY Italy

DATE DISTR. 15 April 1948

SUBJECT Communist Insurrection not Expected
by the Italian Government

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1. It is reported that the conviction exists, even among the less fanatic members of the extreme Left, that the Popular Front will not have more than 170 or 175 deputies and that the Christian Democratic representation will exceed this figure by about thirteen.
2. Symptomatic of the decrease in leftist strength has been the succession of members leaving the Communist Party (twenty-four at Leverano di Lecce, 400 at San Giuseppe Jato near Palermo, and 300 at Trepuzzi) all of which indicates that the organization of the extreme Left in the South, on which considerable emphasis had been placed to balance the decline in the North, is less solid than was thought.
3. The son of Ruggero Grieco, employed by Tass in Rome, in a conversation on 5 April, stated as follows:
 - (a) Promotion of scandal against the Vatican by means of the publication of alleged Vatican documents has failed completely.
 - (b) The Popular Front has no hope in Rome which is traditionally bourgeois in spirit.
 - (c) Popular Front propaganda will be intensified during the last week of the campaign but funds are now lacking.
4. Grieco's son gave no impression of any confidence in an electoral victory for the Popular Front nor did Ambrogio Donini who is a candidate for the Senate and who is said to have stated frankly that the campaign was not progressing satisfactorily.
5. Many are reported to be leaving the Socialist Party (PSI) in Emilia, Le Marche, and in Genoa. Recent surveys indicate that the Socialist Party of Italian Workers (PSLI) may emerge with a surprisingly large following in the North.

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6. The Rome Command of the Carabinieri is said to have estimated on 10 April that out of a total vote of twenty-six million (90% of the registered voters) the Popular Front could not be expected to poll less than seven, or more than twelve, million votes. Comparing the prospects of the 1948 elections with the results in the 1946 elections, the Carabinieri are of the opinion that the strength of the Popular Front will decline in the North and probably in Central Italy and will gain in the South. The Christian Democrats are expected to obtain between ten and twelve million votes. Of the remaining six or seven million, one half million will be lost in the fractional lists which will have no national significance. Either the National Bloc or the Lombardo Socialists will have third place, according to the Carabinieri estimate, and will be followed by the Movimento Sociale Italiano and the Republican Party.

7. General Pieche, personal aide of Minister Scelba, is reported to have stated, on 11 April, that according to information reaching Minister Scelba, the Communists have been ordered to mobilize their forces through the federations and sections for 16 April, and to be ready for any eventuality by 20 April. Pieche added that although there is no evidence to this effect, at hand, the Communists intend to promote a simultaneous uprising after the elections in order to gain power. Local outbreaks of violence, assaults on the polls to change the balloting results in areas where they predominate cannot be excluded. Pieche is reported to feel, however, that the reaction of the Government to activities of this nature would be such as not to permit their continuation or development. He stated that two demonstrations of force carried out by the police and the armed forces in the past two weeks had had the effect of revealing not only the capabilities of the public forces to deal with outbreaks, but also the sympathy of the people with these forces. In conclusion, Pieche expressed the opinion that the Communists would not attempt a coordinated insurrection after the voting.
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[REDACTED] Comment: General Giuseppe Pieche was appointed in March by Minister Scelba to serve as his personal aide (with the rank of prefect) for the coordination of activity relating to public order in the event of an insurrection.

8. Another high official in the Ministry of the Interior is reported to have confirmed more or less the opinions of Pieche, namely that the Ministry does not believe that the Communists will undertake concerted insurrectionary action immediately following the elections, and if local attempts at violence are made in areas where the Party predominates, the Government will react very forcefully.

9. The same official stated that he had been informed on 13 April that a very secret meeting of all the Communist leaders had been held at Communist headquarters in Rome. In the course of the meeting, Luigi Longo is said to have stated that a survey of the composition of the Party had revealed that the mass membership was not what had been expected. Gian Carlo Pajetta, however, allegedly declared that the Garibaldi Youth groups were ready for any eventuality. Following the meeting the various leaders, including Vincenzo Moscatelli, left Rome.

10. The Ministry, at least up to the present time, apparently does not feel that there will be an insurrection but is on the alert for any eventuality. In this connection Questore Agnesina in Milan was assigned five thousand men which he demanded before he would accept the responsibility in the area.

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